



Biden offers alternative student debt relief plan



People in favor of canceling student debt protest outside the Supreme Court, Friday, June 30, 2023, in Washington.

Associated Press

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Biden offers alternative student debt relief plan

From Front

By **WILL WEISSERT and COLLEEN LONG**

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden vowed Friday to push ahead with a new plan to provide student loan relief for millions of borrowers while blaming Republican "hypocrisy" for triggering the day's Supreme Court decision that wiped out his original plan. Biden said payment requirements for student loans would resume in coming weeks, but that he would work under the authority of the Higher Education Act to begin a new program designed to ease borrowers' threat of default if they fall behind over the next year.

Hours after the Supreme Court ruling, Biden commented from the White House, trying to stay on the political offensive even as the ruling undermined a key promise to young voters who will be vital to his 2024 reelection campaign. Biden delivered most of his remarks in a measured tone but then raised his voice at the end when a reporter asked if he had given borrowers false hope.

"I didn't give any false hope," he said heatedly. "The Republicans snatched away the hope that they were given."



President Joe Biden speaks about the student debt relief portal beta test in the South Court Auditorium on the White House complex in Washington, Oct. 17, 2022.

Associated Press

Ticking off what he said were billions of dollars in benefits to the well-to-do under the Trump administration, he said, "These Republican officials just couldn't bear the thought of providing relief for working class, middle class Americans."

"The hypocrisy of Republican elected officials is stunning," he said.

Top administration officials said they had met for weeks to discuss how to handle the Supreme Court's expected reversal of Biden's original plan.

Electoral consequences aside, progressive Democrats in Congress and activists clamored for the White House to offer a swift and substantial response to the court's decision. Natalia Abrams, president and

founder of the Student Debt Crisis Center, said the responsibility falls "squarely" on Biden's shoulders.

"The president possesses the power, and must summon the will, to secure the essential relief that families across the nation desperately need," Abrams said in a statement.

Massachusetts Democratic Sen. Elizabeth Warren, one of her party's leading voices on the left, said, "The president has more tools to cancel student debt — and he must use them."

The GOP has long argued that repaying the student loans is a fairness issue, and they celebrated the ruling. Betsy DeVos, who served as secretary of education under President Donald Trump, called Biden's original plan "deeply unfair to

the majority of Americans who don't have student loans." Republicans now seeking their party's 2024 presidential nomination lined up to applaud the ruling, with former Vice President Mike Pence saying he was "pleased that the court struck down the radical left's effort to use the money of taxpayers who played by the rules and repaid their debts in order to cancel the debt of bankers and lawyers in New York, San Francisco, and Washington." Former U.S. ambassador to the United Nation's Nikki Haley said the Supreme Court was "right to throw out Joe Biden's power grab."

Trying to place the onus for ending the plan on the GOP could allow Biden's reelection campaign to keep the issue of students loans as one of strength in the short term. But that may ultimately offer little solace to 43 million Americans who will now have to start again repaying their student loans.

"We do not want to go into excruciating debt for our entire lives to enhance our education," Voters of Tomorrow, a Gen Z-led organization that promotes the power of young Americans, said in a statement. The White House's efforts to block payments were an attempt to keep a Biden

2020 campaign promise to wipe out student loan debt that was especially popular with young voters and progressives.

Both will be vital to Biden in next year's presidential race — but may be less energized about supporting him after the high court's decision.

Wisdom Cole, the national director of the NAACP Youth & College Division, said Black Americans helped put Biden in the White House, so there's an obligation for him to "finish the job" with his pledges to provide relief for borrowers around the country. He suggested a lack of action could see Biden face a backlash next year with key demographics — specifically young voters and Black voters.

"It's going to have a huge impact on the next election. This was a key point. This was a key policy priority," Cole said, adding, "If we don't do this, we continue the cycle of seeing our elected leaders make promises and not follow through."

A May poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research found that 43% of U.S. adults approve of how Biden sought to handle student debt, similar to his approval rating overall of 40% in the same poll. □



Air Force Master Sgt. and chef Opal Poullard, left, and Marine Corps Gunnery Sgt. and chef Dustin Lewis, right, pose for a photo at the White House in Washington, Friday, June 30, 2023.

Associated Press

By **DARLENE SUPERVILLE and COLLEEN LONG**

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — An Air Force chef and a Marine Corps chef, both crowned

Jill Biden hosts military chefs crowned 'Chopped' champs for guest stint in White House Navy Mess

"Chopped" champions during Jill Biden's appearance on a military-themed episode of the Food Network show, spent Friday whipping up lemon-herb scallops and osso buco in the White House Navy Mess.

Air Force chef Opal Poullard, 37, and Marine Corps chef Dustin Lewis, 34, accepted the mission from the first lady, who made a surprise appearance in a May episode of "Chopped," as part of her White House initiative to support active-duty and retired service members, their families and caregivers.

A panel of judges ruled that the four-person team of military chefs, which included an Army and a Navy cook, had defeated a team of four Food Network celebrity chefs. The first lady congratulated the winners, gave them White House aprons signed by herself and President Joe Biden and invited them to the executive mansion to help cook for the Fourth of July on Tuesday.

The guest chef stint at the White House came as Jill Biden on Friday visited the Marine Corps Recruit Depot on Parris Island, South

Carolina, to help mark the 50th anniversary of the nation's all-volunteer military, which she and the president will also celebrate on Tuesday.

Poullard is a Los Angeles native based at Fort Gregg-Adams in Virginia, where she is an advanced culinary instructor. Lewis, who was born in Dayton, Ohio, and is stationed in North Carolina, most recently was executive chef to the Marine Corps commandant. He previously served as the executive chef to Presidents Barack Obama and Donald Trump. □

Haze, heat and storms are dulling the start of summer in many parts of the U.S.

By **TOM DAVIES**
Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Smoky haze, hot weather and powerful storms were dulling the start of summer in many parts of the U.S. heading into a long July Fourth weekend.

From heat waves in the South and West to unhealthy air quality in the Northeast, much of the U.S. was under the threat of extreme weather. In the Midwest, people in Illinois and Indiana on Friday were recovering from a powerful storm that moved through a day earlier and packed winds reaching more than 70 miles per hour (112 kilometers per hour).

The storm damaged trees and buildings in the central parts of both states from the Mississippi River to the Indianapolis area. Crews worked to replace electrical lines entangled in downed trees ahead of more expected thunderstorms and temperatures climbing to around 90 degrees Fahrenheit (32 degrees Celsius). Utility companies reported that more than 250,000 homes and businesses were still without electricity.

Brian Alexander, 55, swept up debris from the front yard of his Springfield, Ill.



Cannon Brown, 5, plays in the water at a local park's splash pad Friday, June 30, 2023 in Nashville, Tenn.

inois, home that included tree limbs that fell and struck his car, leaving several small dents.

"Very lucky on that," Alexander said. "No power, but we'll manage. We're just waiting for the city to get us hooked up again and we'll get everything cleaned up. Probably go to a hotel tonight."

City Water, Light and Power, the city-owned utility, said 40,000 residents had lost power in the storm, and crews had restored 9,000 by late Thursday. Hundreds

of powerlines were down, poles broken and transformers and other electric equipment has been damaged, spokeswoman Amber Sabin said.

The National Weather Service said the storm was a derecho, which is often described as an inland hurricane because of its line of strong winds stretching for hundreds of miles.

"We had damage all the way from northeast Kansas, all the way down into Kentucky and across Indiana," said John Bumgardner, a

meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Illinois.

In the South, a dangerous heat wave that has been blamed for the deaths of at least 14 people was expected to last into the weekend in some areas. Forecasters warned that heat indexes could rise above 110 degrees Fahrenheit (43 degrees Celsius) and an excessive heat warning was in place Friday for parts of Tennessee, Arkansas and Mississippi.

In Memphis, Tennessee, of-

ficials said relief efforts were focused on those who still had no power after storms Sunday that knocked down trees and power lines. About 10,000 homes and businesses still had no power on Friday morning, according to Memphis Light, Gas and Water.

"To all of those customers, I'm sorry for what you're going through. I know how difficult it can be in the absence of a utility and a commodity that you rely on for your daily life to help you cook, clean, and stay cool," said Doug McGowen, the utility's president and CEO, during a news conference Thursday.

The storm in the Midwest did help clear the region's air of smoke from Canadian wildfires that had prompted warnings for people to stay inside. The Environmental Protection Agency had listed many cities, including Chicago, Detroit, Indianapolis and Cleveland, Ohio, as having "very unhealthy air" earlier in the week.

The EPA warned Friday that parts of Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey and Connecticut could experience "unhealthy" air conditions because of the wildfires in Quebec and northern Ontario. □

Associated Press

Congress demands info on security clearance suspension of Iran envoy

By **MATTHEW LEE**
AP Diplomatic Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee is demanding that the State Department produce more information about the suspension of the U.S. special envoy for Iran's security clearance.

Rep. Michael McCaul, a Texas Republican, said Friday the Biden administration owed Congress a full explanation for the suspension of envoy Rob Malley's clearance and his being placed on unpaid leave. Malley had led administra-

tion efforts to revive the faltering Iran nuclear deal. But he has not been active in his main job for weeks and until Thursday the State Department had told journalists and lawmakers that he was on extended personal leave for unspecified family reasons. On Thursday, however, department officials said Malley was the subject of an investigation into the mishandling of classified information and had been placed on unpaid leave.

"These reports raise serious concerns both regarding Malley's conduct and whether the State Depart-

ment misled Congress and the American public," McCaul said in a letter to Secretary of State Antony Blinken.

"While the suspension of Special Envoy Malley's clearance is independently troubling, our concern is compounded by the State Department's failure to respond to the committee's efforts to conduct oversight of its negotiations with and policy toward Iran," he said. McCaul also noted that the initial explanation for Malley's absence from the job, and his failure to appear at congressional hearings on

Iran policy, turned out to be incorrect. □



Robert Malley, U.S. Special Envoy for Iran, is shown on June 20, 2021, in Vienna, Austria.

Associated Press

DC promises a 'very, very robust' police presence to maintain public safety over July 4 holiday

By ASHRAF KHALIL
Associated Press

With a flood of visitors and tourists expected, officials in the nation's capital are mobilizing additional police officers and dozens of teams of civilian peacekeepers in an attempt to keep rising violent crime rates from marring the holiday weekend.

"The safety of our residents and visitors is MPD's number one priority," said Ashan Benedict, interim police chief for the Metropolitan Police Department. "Unsafe and illegal behaviors will not be tolerated in the District of Columbia."

Benedict said the MPD will be deploying a "very, very robust" contingent of officers but didn't mention specific numbers. "We'll have a lot of officers out there," he said.

Events for visitors and residents include the Independence Day Parade on Constitution Avenue and the annual Capital Fourth concert on the National Mall followed by a fireworks display. A smaller local parade will take place in northwest D.C. and the local government is sponsoring a concert featuring Washington's signature Go-Go music at Freedom Plaza near the White House. May-



Washington Metropolitan Police Department Interim Chief of Police Ashan Benedict speaks during a news conference on the upcoming Fourth of July holiday in Washington, Friday, June 30, 2023. Associated Press

or Muriel Bowser's government has been struggling to handle steadily rising violent crime rates in recent years. Although police and city officials point out that overall crime rates have dropped, murders and carjackings have spiked creating an overall public perception that crime is getting worse. The issue was a primary topic of debate last year when Bowser successfully ran for a third term in office. Although it's still well below the levels in the 1980s and early 1990s, when Washington

D.C. regularly led the nation in murders per-capita, the local murder rate has climbed steadily in recent years. In 2022, there was a roughly 10% drop in homicides after years of steady increases. But, after that one-year dip, homicides are up 14 percent compared to this time last year and the city is on pace to surpass 200 homicides for the third year in a row. June has been a particularly bloody month, with a string of homicides, including the recent murder of a 63-year old woman. Over the June-

teenth holiday weekend, 11 people were shot and four died three of them under age 18. "We recognize that gun violence is a challenge," said Lindsey Appiah, deputy mayor for public safety on Friday. "We want to make sure that we have a presence in those neighborhoods that are challenges."

The crime issues come at an awkward time for Bowser; she is between permanent police chiefs after former MPD Chief Robert Contee abruptly retired in May after less than three

years on the job to take a senior position with the FBI. And D.C. crime has become a national headline issue as the Republican-held House of Representatives has begun aggressively using its power to vet local laws and publicly critique both Bowser and the D.C. Council.

Earlier this spring, Bowser and members of the council were summoned before the House Oversight Committee for a heated session on local crime rates. Congress eventually voted to completely overturn the D.C. Council's comprehensive rewrite of the D.C. criminal code. In an embarrassment for heavily-Democratic Washington, the move drew support from dozens of Democratic lawmakers and was signed into law by President Joe Biden. A second House of Representatives attempt to overturn a package of police accountability and reform legislation failed.

For July 4, the mayor's office is organizing groups of civilian violence interrupters and community leaders into so-called "Safety Go" teams that will be deployed in 28 different "hot spot neighborhoods," around the city, Appiah said. □

The U.N.'s scientific and education organization votes to readmit the U.S.



The logo of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) is seen during the 39th session of the General Conference at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris, Saturday, Nov. 4, 2017.

Associated Press

By MATTHEW LEE
AP Diplomatic Writer
WASHINGTON (AP) —

The United Nations' scientific, educational and cultural organization has agreed to readmit the United States as a member.

UNESCO's governing board voted 132-10 on Friday to accept the U.S. proposal to rejoin the Paris-based agency. America's membership will become official once Secretary of State Antony Blinken or a designee formally accepts the invitation, according to Biden administration officials. Blinken said the vote would "restore U.S. leader-

ship on a host of issues of importance and value to the American people."

"I am encouraged and grateful that today the membership accepted our proposal, which will allow the United States to take the next, formal steps toward fully rejoining the organization," he said in a statement.

Russian, Palestinian and North Korean representatives had held up consideration of the U.S. proposal on Thursday with hours of procedural delays. That session was adjourned due to fatigue on the part of UNESCO interpreters.

In addition to Russia, North Korea and the Palestinians, those that voted against readmitting the U.S. were Belarus, China, Eritrea, Indonesia, Iran, Nicaragua and Syria.

The Biden administration had announced in early June that it would apply to rejoin the organization mainly because it was concerned that China was filling a gap left by the U.S. absence from the body. The 193-member UNESCO plays a major role in setting international standards for artificial intelligence and technology education around the world. □

Europe's border agency seeks answers from Greece on alleged illegal deportations of migrants

By **DEREK GATOPOULOS**
and **NICHOLAS PAPHITIS**
Associated Press

ATHENS, Greece (AP) — The European Union's border agency is seeking "clarifications and information" from Greece's coast guard on two alleged cases of migrants who crossed by boat being illegally deported back to Turkey, a European official said Friday. The official said Frontex's executive director Hans Leijten wrote to a senior police official representing Greece on the Frontex management board, requesting a reply by July 10. The agency helps patrol EU member Greece's eastern borders.

Greece's center-right government has in recent years stepped up patrols in the eastern Aegean Sea, radically reducing the numbers of migrants from the Middle East and Africa crossing in small boats from neighboring Turkey. But Athens has been repeatedly accused of dumping migrants who enter Greek waters back inside Turkey's maritime jurisdiction without allowing them to apply for asylum an illegal practice known as "pushbacks." There have been similar claims on Greece's treatment of migrants crossing the land border with Turkey. Greece denies the accusations, saying its migration policy is "strict but fair."



European Council President Charles Michel, left, speaks with Greece's Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis, center, and Bulgaria's Prime Minister Nikolai Denkov during a round table meeting at the European Council building in Brussels, Friday, June 30, 2023.

Associated Press

Greece denies the accusations, saying its migration policy is "strict but fair." Separately, Greece's coast guard has been strongly criticized for its handling of the June 14 sinking of a trawler carrying hundreds of migrants from Libya to Italy, which left more than 500 people feared dead.

The European official, who had knowledge of the Frontex communication, spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity as they were not authorized to discuss the matter with the media.

The letter dated Thursday referred to two alleged incidents on April 11 and 22 off the eastern Aegean island of Lesbos — a major destination for migrants crossing from the nearby Turkish coast in small boats. The first was reported by The New York Times, based on a video provided by an activist. It claimed Greek authorities illegally deported a group of migrants who had reached Lesbos, leaving them on a life raft at sea for Turkish authorities to pick up. In the second, it was alleged that a Portuguese Frontex boat helping patrol the region stopped a boat carrying migrants and handed it over to the Greek coast guard, which forced it back into Turkish waters.

Leijten's letter said Frontex has launched a "Serious Incident Report" into the April 11 case, which "confirms the gravity of the allegations." "I am aware that there might be investigations in progress with regard to the events mentioned above," it said. □

The U.S. flies nuclear-capable bombers in a fresh show of force against North Korea

By **HYUNG-JIN KIM**
Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — The United States flew nuclear-capable bombers to the Korean Peninsula on Friday in its latest show of force against North Korea, days after the North staged massive anti-U.S. rallies in its capital. The long-range B-52 bombers took part in joint aerial drills with other U.S. and South Korean fighter jets over the peninsula, South Korea's Defense Ministry said in a statement. The bombers' flyover is the latest in a series of temporary U.S. deployments of strategic assets in South Korea in response to North Korea's push to expand its nuclear arsenal.

Two weeks ago, the U.S. deployed a nuclear-powered submarine capable of carrying about 150 Tomahawk missiles to South Korean waters for the first time in six years. The USS Michigan's arrival came a day after North Korea resumed missile tests to protest previous U.S.-South Korean drills that it views as an invasion rehearsal. The South Korean Defense Ministry said the B-52 bombers' deployment boosted the visibility of U.S. strategic assets to the peninsula. It said the allies have been demonstrating their firm resolve to strengthen combined defense postures and will continue joint drills involving U.S. strategic bombers.

On Sunday, more than 120,000 North Koreans participated in mass rallies in Pyongyang to mark the 73rd anniversary of the start of the Korean War. During the rallies, officials and residents delivered speeches vowing "merciless revenge" against the United States over the war while accusing the U.S. of plotting an invasion on North Korea. The Korean War ended with an armistice, not a peace treaty, leaving the peninsula in a technical state of war. The U.S. stations about 28,000 troops in South Korea as deterrence against potential aggression by North Korea. Since its June 15 launches of two short-range ballistic



In this photo provided by the South Korean Defense Ministry, U.S. B-52H bombers, center, and F-16 fighter jets and South Korean Air Force F-35A fighter jets, right bottom, fly over the Korean Peninsula during a joint air drill in South Korea on April 14, 2023.

Associated Press

missiles, North Korea hasn't performed any further public weapons tests. But the U.S. bombers' deployment could prompt it to launch weapons again in protest. □

missiles, North Korea hasn't performed any further public weapons tests. But the U.S. bombers' deployment could prompt it to launch weapons again in protest. □

Haitians need aid and face 'staggering levels' of gender violence

By **EDITH M. LEDERER**

Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) —

Close to half of Haiti's people, 2.2 million adults and 3 million children, need humanitarian aid and thousands of youngsters face "staggering levels" of gender-based violence, the head of the U.N. children's agency said Thursday.

"Haitians and our team, they're telling me it's never been worse than it is now unprecedented hunger and malnutrition, grinding poverty, a crippled economy, resurgence of cholera, and a massive insecurity that creates a deadly downward spiral of violence," said Catherine Russell, the executive director of UNICEF.

Russell said what was clear during her just-completed visit was that the police don't have the capacity to secure the country and protect the population from violent gangs and "something needs to change." "We have to, as an international community, say we can't watch this country completely fall apart," she said. "And so my job is to try to bring some attention to



Januelle Dafka, her baby girl Princess and her 15-year-old daughter Tiffi, pose for a photo at a makeshift shelter in Jean-Kere Almizar's front yard, in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Sunday, June 4, 2023. Both mother and daughter said they were raped by gang members and that both became pregnant.

Associated Press

that problem and to make sure people understand how terrible the humanitarian crisis is, what kind of impact that's having on children."

Russell repeated at a news conference some of the stories she heard at a center for survivors of gender-based violence in a dan-

gerous part of the capital, Port-au-Prince.

An 11-year-old girl who was eight months pregnant recounted how five men had grabbed her on the street and raped her, Russell said. The girl gave birth days after their talk, she said.

Also at the center, Russell heard from a woman

who described how men barged into her home and raped her. And when her 20-year-old sister resisted, they killed her by setting her on fire and then burned down the house.

"I was told this is part of a new strategy by the armed groups they rape girls and women and they burn their

homes to make them more vulnerable and more easily controlled," Russell said.

Russell spoke a day after William O'Neill, who was appointed in April by the U.N. human rights chief as the U.N. expert on Haiti, said at the end of a 10-day visit to the beleaguered Caribbean nation that a specialized international force is needed to fight gang violence and that a weapons embargo should be implemented immediately.

"I found a country bruised by violence, misery, fear and suffering," O'Neill said Wednesday, adding that all types of human rights are being violated. "It is urgent to take action. The survival of an entire nation is at stake."

An understaffed and under-resourced police department has been struggling to fight against warring gangs that have grown more powerful since the July 2021 assassination of President Jovenel Moïse. The violence has led to an increase in starvation, with people unable to leave their homes and trucks unable to deliver goods. □

Dutch semiconductor machine export restrictions to come into force in September

By **MIKE CORDER**

Associated Press

THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP) —

Dutch companies that produce machines that make advanced semiconductor processor chips will be required to have export licenses before they can sell them overseas starting in September, the government announced Friday.

The new measure, which was first announced in March, "is country neutral," the government said. But it is seen as part of a U.S. policy that aims at restricting China's access to materials used to make such chips, which can be used in military technology. The requirement will notably affect Dutch company ASML, the world's only producer

of machines that use extreme ultraviolet lithography to make advanced semiconductor chips. The Dutch government has prohibited the Veldhoven-

based company from exporting some of its machines to China since 2019. "We have taken this step in the interest of our national security. It is good

that the companies concerned now know where they stand. This way they can adapt to the new regulations in time," Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation Minister Liesje Schreinemacher said in a statement.

Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte visited U.S. President Joe Biden in January for talks that included discussions about ASML's advanced chip machines. The Biden administration in October imposed export controls to limit China's access to advanced chips, which it says can be used to make weapons, commit human rights abuses and improve the speed and accuracy of its military logistics.

It urged allies like Japan

and the Netherlands to follow suit.

In a statement on the website of its Dutch embassy, China slammed the new measures as "completely unreasonable and untenable."

It said such restrictions "will not only damage the legitimate rights of Chinese companies, but also cause losses to Dutch companies, destabilize the global industrial and supply chains and hurt the good reputation of the Netherlands in supporting free trade."

ASML, headquartered in the southern Dutch town of Veldhoven, has continued to ship lower-quality chip lithography systems to China despite the government's restrictions on advanced machines. □



The logo of ASML, a leading maker of semiconductor production equipment, hangs on the head office in Veldhoven, Netherlands, on Jan. 30, 2023.

Associated Press

Aruba's Nature is to be Cherished



ST. CRUZ — The national park Arikok comprises almost 18 % of the island. Its rugged terrain, desert-like hills filled with tall cacti, breathtaking coastline and protected local flora and fauna welcome you to be explored. There is numerous wildlife to discover like for example the sea turtle who lays his eggs on the park's beaches. There are more places on the island that are a preserved area like the Bubali Plas which is a bird sanctuary.

The national park Arikok takes you on a memorable journey of the islands past offering unique geological, cultural and historical sites. These can all be enjoyed and explored either on your own or during guided tours. A wide variety of ed-

ucational and informative programs and fun activities is available.

Did you know that four of the in total seven species of sea turtle lay their eggs on Aruba's beaches? In the national park, a Least Tern (*Sterna antillarum*) keeps a strict eye on a very special event taking place below on the beach: a majestic Leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*) heads back to sea after laying her eggs, while another nest laid 2 months ago by the same female hatches. A very rare occurrence of daytime nesting and hatching. Sea turtles prefer nesting in the cool and dark hours of the night. And hatchlings usually wait for the cue of cooling surface sand before emerging.

Bubali Magic

This beautiful close-up image of the pink bird is courtesy of Michiel Overstegen of the Aruba Birdlife Conservation. This important foundation showcases and builds awareness of Aruba's birds and other native flora and fauna. You may have seen a 'pink cloud' lately at the Bubali or Spanish Lagoon Wetlands areas? It's most likely to be Roseate Spoonbills (*Ajaia ajaja*) or 'Chucharon Cora' as they are known in Papiamentu. This unusual looking bird forages in shallow muddy water while sweeping its flattened bill from side to side to catch small fish, crustaceans and other aquatic invertebrates. The Roseate Spoonbill remains an uncommon sight as they are vulnerable to degradation of feeding and nesting habitats (Wetlands). (Source: arikok national park)

The aforementioned is just a part of what Aruba's nature has to offer. We cannot stress enough to go, see for yourself. The island has the most beautiful beaches but it is also worthwhile



to go beyond this and get an idea of our entire island. Lately there is a discussion going on about the effect certain activities have on our nature, for example the ATV vehicles cause a lot of dust, noise and leave tire tracks. Animals live in these areas where the vehicles run, often with high speed and with detrimental con-

sequences to flora and fauna. Motorized vehicles are forbidden to drive on the sand dunes in the Northern part of the island and all beaches in Aruba are forbidden for any motorized vehicle. Treasure our island to enjoy it like you do: as a tropical and natural paradise. We truly appreciate it! □

On July 1st we commemorate "Keti Koti" in the Dutch Kingdom

Celebrating the abolishment of slavery within the Dutch Caribbean

(Oranjestad)—On July 1st, Suriname and the former Dutch Antilles commemorate the abolishment of slavery within the Dutch Kingdom. Although the scale of slavery in Aruba was not as big as in our sister islands, we find that it is still important to acknowledge and give recognition to the Afro-Caribbean descendants that still live on the island, and the influence that their ancestors have had on the make up of the Aruban Culture.

Brief history

In Aruba, there were two slave routes that occurred on the island during the colonial era: The Amerindian Slave Trade and the African Slave Trade. Before the African slave trade was introduced in Aruba, many of the Amerindian Caquetios were subjected to slavery, mostly by the hands of Spanish colonizers. A large part of the Caquetio community on the island were exported to Hispaniola (Dominican Republic) and were forced to work in the land mines. After the Dutch gained control of the island, many Amerindian natives were forced to work for them.

The history of African slavery in Aruba was one that was relatively short-lived compared to the rest of the Caribbean region. Furthermore, Afri-

can slavery on the island came in two waves: A short 4-year wave from 1715 to 1719, and another longer wave from the late eighteenth century up to the 1863, the year in which slavery was abolished within the Dutch Kingdom. By that time, 496 enslaved Africans on Aruba were emancipated, and they integrated relatively easy in the free Aruban society. Many went to work in the police force, while other became successful merchants.

The Afro-Caribbean influence on Aruban culture

Because the formerly enslaved were able to integrate easily and fast in Aruban society, they did not form a separate subculture. In fact, white colonists, Amerindians, and Africans intermixed, resulting in Aruba's Mestizo-Creole population of today. This intermixture of culture and race also brought with it certain aspects that is still prominent in the modern cultural identity. In terms of African influences on our culture, this can be seen in all areas of our cultural identity, ranging from folk tales, music and dance to even food and way of life. For example, as children, Arubans grow up hearing tales of the trickster spider Compa Nanzi (Anansi), intro-



duced in Surinam and the Dutch Antilles by African slaves. Popular music and dance genres on the island, like the tumba and tambu, are also based on African influences. Soul food on the island is heavily based on Afro-Caribbean dishes found in other islands as far as Jamaica and Trinidad. It was only later on, during the 20th and 21st century that Aruba saw a rise in Latino-American influences on our culture and way of living. However, the African-Caribbean impact on our cultural identity is still very much prominent. □

Source: Places of Memory: Aruba and the Slave Trade Route (2007) by Luc Alofs.

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Watch out for Blue Crab Migration near Savaneta

(Oranjestad)—The department of nature & environment in Aruba are urging motorists to watch out for blue crabs crossing the road in Pos Chiquito to make their way to the ocean.

They added a new bright yellow road sign with "Land Crab Crossing" to remind people to be cautious while driving on the highway on Pos Chiquito with blue crabs.



Blue crabs in Aruba are found plenty near the beach areas, especially in Pos Chiquito, because of the amount of mangroves. They are known to dig holes deep in the beach sand in seek of humidity.

The diet of blue crabs consists of decomposed trees, insects, scorpions and rest of dead animals. Nesting season for blue crabs is between June & July.



Why protect blue crabs?

Because they are of high value for the ecology of the mangroves. Conserving the blue crabs is crucial for the preservation of mangroves.

Watch out for crossing blue crabs on the highway near Pos Chiquito & Santo Lago

Prohibited by law: leaving the island with seashells, white sand or corals

(Oranjestad)—Often times, the customs department at the airport intercepts many tourists leaving the island with seashells, white sand and/or corals as souvenirs.

pay before leaving. This is surely not a pleasant experience for the tourist. This also leads to a negative reaction which can put our tourism in a negative light.

Conforming to the international treaty of CITES and our local law which protects our Flora & Fauna, it is absolutely prohibited to take any seashell, sand and coral outside of Aruba. This is to protect our environment. The high number of seashells, coral and amount of sand confiscated is very strange and it is suspected that our own locals are the ones selling these to the tourists, which is unacceptable.

Upon confiscation at the airport, you can also face a fine that they have to

Though we love to accommodate our visitors, let's all give nature the respect it deserves by protecting our environment. Stop collecting seashells, white sand and corals from our shores and stop buying or accepting these from local sellers or companies.

We want our future generations and visitors to enjoy the beauty of our beaches, shells and corals in a sustainable way, without destroying or disrupting the Aruban ecosystem. Help us protect what is ours!



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Aruba Tourism Authority honored loyal visitors at Marriott's Surf Club

The Aruba Tourism Authority recently had the great pleasure to recognize Goodwill Ambassadors of Aruba. This lovely couple was respectively honored with a certificate acknowledging their years of visits, loyalty, and love for the island of Aruba.

The honor certification is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation and to say "Masha Danki" to guests who have visited Aruba 10, 20, or 35 years or more consecutively.

The three honoring levels are as follows:

Distinguished Visitor (10>years consecutively visiting Aruba)
Goodwill Ambassador (20>years consecutively visiting Aruba)
Emerald Ambassador (35>years consecutively visiting Aruba)

The honorees were:

Goodwill Ambassadors of Aruba
Mr. Tim & Mrs. Susan Decker from New York, United States.



Ms. Kimberley Richardson representing the Aruba Tourism Authority, and staff members of the Marriott's Surf Club bestowed the certificate to the honorees, presented them with memorable gifts, and also thanked them for choosing Aruba as their best-loved vacation destination and as their home-

away-from-home.

On behalf of the Aruba Tourism Authority, we would like to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to Mr. & Mrs. Decker for their continued visits to the "One Happy Island".

Top reasons for returning to Aruba provided by Mr. & Mrs. Decker were:

Aruba's friendly people.
Aruba's nice sand.
The beaches in Aruba.
Aruba's safety.
Aruba's warm consistent weather all year round. ☐

Aruba to me



ORANJESTAD — You are back or still enjoying your vacation?... we would like to portrait you! By inviting you to send us your favorite vacation picture while enjoying our Happy Island.

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Episode 11

Geo insular patrimony; The Limestone landscape

Limestone is a sedimentary rock composed primarily of calcium carbonate (CaCO_3) in the form of the mineral calcite. It most commonly forms in clear, warm, shallow marine waters. It is usually an organic sedimentary rock that forms from the accumulation of shell, coral, algal, and fecal debris. It can also be a chemical sedimentary rock formed by the precipitation of calcium carbonate from lake or ocean water.



The areas consisting of Limestone is what today surrounds the Aruba lava formation and the areas which includes the QD conglomerations. Limestone terraces can be best observed at the north and east coast of the Island. However limestone occurs also inland at Isla, Hudishibana, French Man Pass and Canashito for example. These terraces are mostly areas with little vegetation and soil. The limestone areas inland are an exception because these areas are usually bordered by a QD landscape. The combination of limestone and quartz diorite also result's in permanent freshwater sources like the one at Fontein and the one east of Malmok. Rainwater is "caught" by limestone and released at the border where the limestone meets the quartz diorite.



The most important geological feature of the limestone landscape are the caves. They were formed by dissolution of limestone by groundwater and were exposed due to changes in sea level and upwards tectonic movements of the earth. For obvious reason all pre-ceramic sites except a minor one are situated in the limestone areas. At Canashito a group of five individuals belonging to this group were buried in a "habri" open space of a big limestone outcrop. Most pre-ceramic individuals in the ca. 70-persons-cemetery at Malmok were buried under large pieces of limestone. The ceramic sites found on limestone show no signs of long-term habitations as these areas have no suitable agricultural soils (unless they occur in association with a QD landscape).

The hydrological conditions are favorable due to some freshwater sources in these areas. One ceramic burial site, Budui, is found in a limestone cave. It is one of the four historic activities that have been recorded in the other caves.

The prehistoric groups used several of the caves for their pictographs. At Fontein, Quadirikiri and Canashito drawings were made inside the limestone caves. At Rooi Thomas and Rincon, the drawings were made in big limestone "habri" open space. No limestone tools have been found in association with prehistoric groups. The softness of the rock is clearly a limiting factor. A variety of limestone called crystalline lime-

stone has been used to make human figurines. Furthermore, all these categories of rocks can also be divided into crystalline rocks (ALF and batholith) which are impermeable, and limestone, which has the natural components of the more recent Landscape.

In the previous chapter, we suggested that originally there were three main categories of rock, the group from the Aruba Lava formation (mainly diabase), the group from the batholith (quartz diorite) and the limestone formation.

This is basic for our understanding of the soil that we find today on top of the main geologic formations. This soil consists partly of these rocks and is a product of erosion. By erosion we mean all the processes that loosen up rock and existent soil and carry these downhill into the landscape. Besides sand and clay which are erosion products of rocks, the soil also contains humus. This latter is the decay material of organic matter (remains of dead plants, animals, etc.) So, the soil is the surface accumulation of sand, clay and humus, no crystalline structure, and is permeable.

In general, a soil profile is made up of three units or horizons, the topsoil which contains all kind of decay material, the aforementioned, humus. It is characterized by a darker color. The subsoil has little decay material with coarser rock fragments than the topsoil, and the original rock lying under the soil is the parent or bed rock.

The thickness of these horizons depends on age, climate, vegetation and other factors closely related to the easiness of the soil to be transported. The A horizon is the part of the soil where all biological activity takes place. For this reason it is important for the vegetation and/or cultivation possibilities. According to the local report, and to our own field observations, this "ideal" stratigraphic situation is extremely rare in Aruba at the present time. The top horizons are thin or absent in most places. Of importance is the comparison of the few places where such layers can be distinguished and places where both top soil and most of next stratus is missing. The former are mostly areas with significant vegetation or vegetation bordering it.

Source; Island Insight column by Etnia Nativa

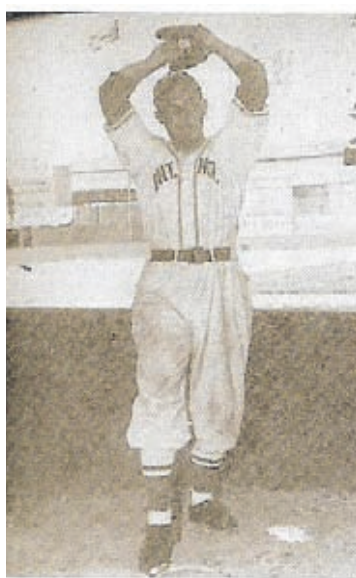


Short history of the beginnings of baseball in Aruba

ORANJESTAD — Baseball was played on the island of Aruba in the 1930's, but only by United States expatriates working for LAGO and living inside the LAGO colony. Jim Bluejacket, the legendary US Indian who had played in two major league teams, worked for LAGO during 14 years and was a key factor in the growth of the popularity of the game in the colony. There is no record of Bluejacket ever playing outside the colony.



Outside the colony, the game of baseball was introduced to Aruba by Venezuelan immigrants and sailors on the Venezuelan fishing boats that used Aruba as their home port. They formed pick-up teams and played games on Sundays on an open field behind what is now the Court of Justice. One of the Venezuelans that comes to mind is Felix Garrido, grandfather of our current Prime-Minister.



In the late 30s the leader of this group was Raúl Aparicio, a cousin of Luis Aparicio who is now enshrined in the Hall of Fame in Cooperstown. The Aparicios were evidently very good at sports. Raúl had two brothers who also played baseball, René and Roman. Rosendo, his only brother who did not play baseball became a professional soccer player in the Venezuelan league. Rosendo was nicknamed "Cabeza de oro" (golden head) for a memorable header he scored to win a game for his team.



Interestingly, it was in Aruba that Luis Aparicio played his first game outside of Venezuela. This took place in 1950 when he played shortstop for the school he attended. Later he played for "Cabimas" in a double-header of the Venezuelan Western League. These official games of the league were authorized to be played in Aruba by the Professional Baseball Organization of Venezuela. Several others who played



in those games have also been enshrined.

Luis Aparicio's father was the super popular Luis "El Grande" (the great one) after whom the baseball stadium in Maracaibo is named. He and his brother owned the professional baseball teams "Gavilanes" which later became the "Aguilas", and the "Cabimas".

In the early '40s, another group, mostly immigrants from the Dominican Republic also became very active with pickup teams. Some of these remained active in baseball well into the early '50s; as umpires, managers even as players. Among these were Nestor "Pantin" Guerrero who also had a musical band. Perhaps not so coincidentally, many of Pantin's players were also musicians. Luthai Pantophlet who umpired many years was a well-known drummer. Gaston Hazel was a bongo player; José Bryson and the brothers Nicholson, Teddy and Julio, all played several instruments.

In San Nicolas, baseball was played on the grounds next to where the LAGO Sport Park (now Laveist Sport Park) was officially inaugurated in March 1941.

During the WWII years, baseball got a big lift from the influx of Puerto Rican and US soldiers stationed here. As LAGO was playing a very important role in the struggle against Hitler, it was able to get all the sports equipment needed here to allow more people to participate.

In the '40s only the Lago Sports Park organized baseball championship games. The first teams to participate were Artraco, (Aruba Trading Co.), Esso Garage and Botica San Lucas. In 1945 Venezuelan employees of the Lago refinery participated under the name of "Cafenol", a very popular Venezuelan coffee brand. Two other groups of Venezuelan im-



migrants formed the teams "Cerveceria" (named after the iconic team Cerveceria Caracas), and "Venezuela", although not all members of these teams were Venezuelans. This was also the year that the team sponsored by Roxy Café started to play as "Dodgers".

Dodgers became the dominant baseball powerhouse till the 1950s.

Other teams that entered the baseball scene in the late 1940s: Pepsi Cola (Oranjestad) and St. Thomas Boys (former students of St. Thomas College, Oranjestad). "Baby Ruth" in San Nicolas played initially under the name "Camel" and "Barnes' Ramblers" the only team consisting of Lago Colony players to participate in the Lago Sport Park championships. "Red Rock Cola" was formed in Oranjestad in 1950.

In 1952 the team Pepsi Cola became "Nesbitt's" and had players of seven countries, including two American expats from Lago Colony.

In 1950 a group of prominent members of the Aruba community founded the Amateur Baseball Bond of Aruba (ABBA) to give structure to the management of the sport and became the organizers of official championship games. While maintaining the existing teams in a league that was referred to as A-class, ABBA established a B-class league in which the "Budweiser" and "Braves" played the first years.

By 1952 Aruba became a member of the International Amateur Baseball Association and fielded a team

managed by Joe Proterra, (former pitcher of "Barnes' Ramblers"), that would play for the first time ever in the Amateur Baseball World Series that took place in Havana, Cuba in September. Surprisingly, Aruba won two of its six games and became the darling of the Havana fans. Nell Harms of the Aruban team was named the "Outstanding player of the week" for his performance against Honduras. He allowed just two hits, struck out 15 and hit the only homerun of the game. Joe Cambria, the famous scout for the Washington Senators offered him a contract, but Nel was not interested, but the next year, at the Amateur Baseball World Series in Caracas, Venezuela, Nel and Ruben Phillips did sign and in 1954 they played professional baseball the Georgia-Florida League and the Texas-New Mexico League. They were the first Arubans to play professionally, but not the only ones.

During the games in Havana, contacts were made with the organizers of Little League Baseball in Cuba which eventually resulted in the introduction of Little League in Aruba. Little League of Aruba has been extremely successful: It has produced many players who earned baseball scholarships at universities in the United States, a few who played professionally in the Netherlands and different countries in the Caribbean and five who reached the major leagues: Calvin Maduro, Eugene Kingsale, Radhames Dijkhoff, Sydney Ponson, and Xander Bogaerts one of the brightest stars of Boston Red Sox. □

Written by Mr. Clyde Harms

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 41 Goes downhill

1 Card collection

5 Burglar's crime meal

10 Verdi pieces

12 TV sound

13 Skater Harding

14 Nursery resident

15 Summer in Paris

16 Tick off

18 Pot fill

19 "Cold as ice," e.g.

21 Thatcher, for one

22 Kitchen containers

24 Composer Bruckner

25 Capone's cohorts

29 Steamed

30 Capital north of Syracuse

32 Lobbying org.

33 Low digit

34 Big shot

35 Tony or Oscar

37 Monsoon weather

39 In shape

40 Burn a bit

DOWN

1 Sees

socially

2 Steamy

3 Film

4 Band-leader

Kyser

5 Carpet fastener

6 "What was that?"

7 Book worker

8 1040 users

9 The present

11 Regatta activity

17 Uses for support

20 Foolish

21 Precept

23 Walks unsteadily

25 Leave base, perhaps

26 Secret

27 Deep chasm

28 Play-ground

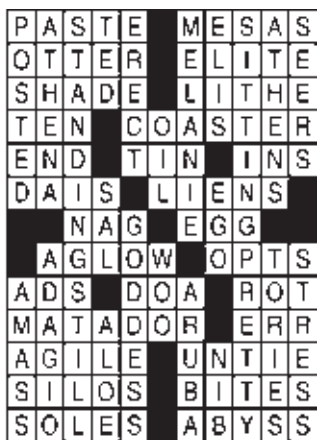
29 Minor arguments

31 Church areas

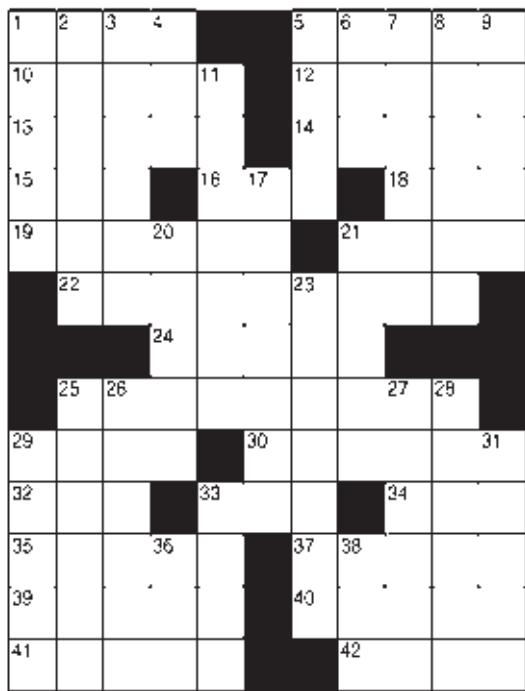
33 Casino figure

36 Sun-burned

38 Target



Yesterday's answer



7-1

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

7-1

CRYPTOQUOTE

Y IYLL SGH KVXL TGHM XWJ
QWJAK BJLG LWIHWMH YMSW
TVSHU TYSGWJS GVOYMF SW T
WUUX VCWJS SGHYU QHAABGW
MH. — VMWMXIWL

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: IF I HAD MY WAY, I'D REMOVE JANUARY FROM THE CALENDAR ALTOGETHER AND HAVE AN EXTRA JULY INSTEAD. — ROALD DAHL

Apple is now the first public company to be valued at \$3 trillion

By MICHAEL LIEDTKE

AP Technology Writer

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) —

Apple became the first publicly traded company to close a trading day with a \$3 trillion market value, marking another milestone for a technology juggernaut that has reshaped society with a line-up of products that churn out eye-popping profits.

Apple shares closed up 2.3% at \$193.97 Friday, bringing its market value to \$3.04 trillion. Apple is one of a handful of technology companies, including Microsoft and chipmaker Nvidia, that helped drive the S&P 500 to a gain of nearly 16% in the first half of the year.

The 47-year-old company co-founded by Silicon Valley legend Steve Jobs had briefly eclipsed a \$3 trillion market value on back-to-back days in January 2022, but couldn't hold on by the time the market closed. In-



An Apple logo adorns the facade of the downtown Brooklyn Apple store on March 14, 2020, in New York.

Associated Press

stead, Apple's stock sunk into a prolonged descent that pushed its market value briefly below \$2 trillion earlier this year amid a slowdown in growth and investor jitters about rising interest rates that affected the entire tech sector.

Apple didn't come close to the \$3 trillion threshold again until earlier this month when the company unveiled what could be its next big product — a high-

priced headset called Vision Pro that thrusts users into artificial settings known as virtual reality.

Although the significance of reaching a \$3 trillion market value is largely symbolic, its magnitude is still breathtaking. Consider, for instance, that \$3 trillion could buy nearly 9 million homes in the U.S., based on the average sales price during the past year as calculated by Zillow. □

Bogus online reviews are targeted by U.S. regulators with new, proposed bans



In this April 17, 2019, file photo, online customer reviews for a product are displayed on a computer in New York.

Associated Press

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Federal regulators are looking to crack down on fake reviews and other deceptive internet practices.

The Federal Trade Commission proposed a new rule Friday that would ban paying for reviews, suppressing honest reviews, selling fake social media engagement and more. Businesses would also be prohibited from running company-controlled websites that claim to be independent, and other deceptive practices like "review hijacking," which makes reviews for one product appear like they were written for significantly different ones. If the proposed rule is approved, following a 60-day public comment period, violators could face hefty penalties. □

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24/7

Company executives urge Europe to rethink its world-leading AI rules



Text from the ChatGPT page of the OpenAI website is shown in this photo, in New York, Feb. 2, 2023.

Associated Press

By COURTNEY BONNELL
AP Business Writer

LONDON (AP) — More than 150 executives are urging the European Union to rethink the world's most comprehensive rules for artificial intelligence, saying Friday that upcoming regulations will make it harder for companies in Europe to compete with rivals overseas, especially when it comes to the technology behind systems like ChatGPT.

Officials at companies from French planemaker Airbus and carmaker Renault to Dutch beer giant Heineken signed an open letter to EU leaders saying the 27-nation bloc's groundbreaking legislation may put shackles on the development of generative AI. That tech-

nology gives popular AI chatbots like ChatGPT the power to generate text, images, video and audio that resemble human work. "Such regulation could lead to highly innovative companies moving their activities abroad" and investors withdrawing their money from AI development in Europe, the letter said. "The result would be a critical productivity gap between the two sides of the Atlantic."

The executives say laws requiring "rigid compliance" would be ineffective when so little is still known about the risks and uses of generative AI. They urged the EU to revise the AI Act to focus broadly on the risks. With growing concerns about the impact of AI

on all parts of life, the letter does acknowledge "a clear need to properly train these models and ensure their safe use."

The corporate leaders called for a regulatory body of experts that can regularly adapt rules to new developments and respond to risks that emerge. They also pointed to the need for transatlantic standards. It's the latest letter to weigh in on the future of AI, which has dazzled users but raised concerns about data privacy, copyright in-

fringement and disinformation. That has sent governments worldwide racing to rein in the technology.

There are also fears about more existential threats to humankind, which scientists and tech industry leaders, including high-level executives at Microsoft and Google, warned about last month. □

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Nashville Predators buy out Matt Duchene as NHL teams prepare for the start of free agency

By STEPHEN WHYNO
AP Hockey Writer

A handful of NHL teams spent Friday clearing out salary cap space with some big-money buyouts on the eve of free agency. The Nashville Predators led the way by buying out Matt Duchene's contract. The 32-year-old center had three years left on his deal at an annual cap hit of \$8 million.

Duchene is the latest veteran player to leave Nashville since former coach Barry Trotz took over as general manager, replacing long-time executive David Poile. The Predators also traded Ryan Johansen to Colorado, continuing the path of a rebuild started when Poile dealt away a handful of players before the deadline in March.

The Winnipeg Jets also put former captain Blake Wheeler on unconditional waivers to buy out the final year of his contract. The Boston Bruins did the same with defenseman



Nashville Predators center Matt Duchene (95) plays against the Vancouver Canucks during the first period of an NHL hockey game Tuesday, Feb. 21, 2023, in Nashville, Tenn.

Mike Reilly and the Detroit Red Wings took the same step with Kailer Yamamoto a day after acquiring him from the Edmonton Oilers. Edmonton continued the process of bringing back key players, re-signing forward Mattias Janmark to a

\$1 million contract for next season.

Ken Holland, looking to help reigning MVP Connor McDavid win the Stanley Cup in what could be his final year as GM, has made it clear the Oilers are firmly in win-now mode, so this is

likely not the end of their dealings.

"I'm looking to win," Holland said Tuesday. "I don't invest in green bananas at this stage of my life."

Shifting into win soon mode, the Chicago Blackhawks signed winger Corey Perry

Associated Press

to a \$4 million contract for next season, a day after acquiring his rights from Tampa Bay. That was the latest step in their plan to surround No. 1 pick Connor Bedard with experienced players, which began earlier this week with a trade with Boston for forwards Taylor Hall and Nick Foligno. Among other moves around the league, the New York Rangers tendered qualifying offers to defenseman K'Andre Miller and 2020 top pick Alexis Lafrenière, among others. They did not qualify defenseman Libor Hajek, meaning he'll become an unrestricted free agent.

So will Wheeler, who looked to be on the outs in Winnipeg for some time

Incoming coach Rick Bowness stripped Wheeler of the captaincy last year in an attempt to fix the locker room culture around the Jets, and GM Kevin Cheveldayoff had been looking to trade the speedy winger who turns 37 on Aug. 31. □

Mike Trout elected to 11th All-Star Game, 4 Texas players chosen to start

By RONALD BLUM
AP Baseball Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Mike Trout will see a bunch of new faces surrounding him at this year's All-Star Game. The Los Angeles Angels center fielder was selected for his 11th appearance on Thursday, and four Texas Rangers were chosen by fans for the American League's lineup for the July 11 game at Seattle's T-Mobile Park.

Nine first-time starters were picked by fans, including three Rangers: catcher Jonah Heim, shortstop Corey Seager and rookie third baseman Josh Jung.

Arizona rookie outfielder Corbin Carroll, who's from Seattle, also was voted in, giving the starting lineups a pair of rookie position players for the third time after Rich Rollins and Tom Tresh in 1962, and Geovany Soto and Kosuke Fukudome in 2008.

"You always put it in your mind that I want to do that someday," Jung said.

Texas reached the season's midpoint at 49-32, on track for its first winning season since 2016. The Rangers host next year's All-Star Game.

Rangers second baseman Marcus Semien was chosen

for his second start.

"We all strive to be the best we can be. And if the fans acknowledge us this year, that means we're doing something," Semien said.

Texas' previous high was three starters in 2012, when Adrian Beltré, Josh Hamilton and Mike Napoli were picked.



Los Angeles Angels designated hitter Shohei Ohtani (17) reacts after scoring off of a triple hit by Mike Trout during the first inning of a baseball game against the Chicago White Sox in Anaheim, Calif., Wednesday, June 28, 2023.

Associated Press

Trout was voted to start for the 10th time and will be joined in the AL lineup by teammate Shohei Ohtani, who last week was chosen at designated hitter as the league's top-vote getter in the first round.

Tampa Bay first baseman Yandy Díaz and outfielder Randy Arozarena were among the first-time starters, joined by Atlanta shortstop Orlando Arcia and catcher Sean Murphy, Miami second baseman Luis Arraez and Carroll.

"I almost cried there," Arraez said after learning of his election.

Arraez was batting over .400 as recently as this past weekend. His average had dipped to .392 as of Thursday.

Three Los Angeles Dodgers were picked: first baseman Freddie Freeman, outfielder Mookie Betts and designated hitter J.D. Martinez.

St. Louis third baseman No-

lan Arenado was elected to his fifth start and eighth appearance.

Yankees outfielder Aaron Judge, elected to start for the fifth time, hasn't played since June 3 because of a torn ligament in his right big toe.

Houston's Yordan Alvarez finished fourth in the AL outfield voting.

Atlanta's Ronald Acuña Jr. earned an outfield spot last week as the NL's top vote-getter during the first round, from May 31 to June 22. The second round started Monday and ended Thursday. Pitchers and reserves will be announced Sunday.

Heim edged Baltimore's Adley Rutschman 52%-48% and Díaz beat out Toronto's Vladimir Guerrero Jr. 53%-47%. The closest NL votes were both 53%-47%: Arraez over Atlanta's Ozzie Albies and Martinez over Philadelphia's Bryce Harper. □

The NFL is addressing gambling suspensions with training

By KYLE HIGHTOWER
AP Sports Writer

NFL chief compliance officer Sabrina Perel has been busy this spring.

As the leader of the NFL's efforts to educate and train the approximately 17,000 players, coaches, team personnel and others about the league's gambling policies, she's in the throes of an annual pilgrimage of sorts.

With training camps opening in less than a month, she's already visited with more than a dozen NFL teams, and leaves them with the same parting message: "You need to follow the policy at all times. ... because this truly does impact the entire team."

The reason the NFL has been motivated to get its personnel on the same page was again in the spotlight Thursday when the league suspended four more players for violations of its gambling policy. Three received yearlong bans for betting on NFL games and one a six-game suspension for wagering on non-NFL games. It brings the total to 10 players disciplined over the past two years as the league vows to increase



Then-Jacksonville Jaguars linebacker Rashod Berry cools off while taking a break during an NFL football practice, Saturday, July 30, 2022, in Jacksonville, Fla.

Associated Press

training efforts across the board with an eye toward protecting the integrity of the game.

Experts believe the rash of suspensions is part of a new reality for the NFL and other leagues with more violations likely on the horizon. But they don't think it's near reaching a critical mass that could cause fans to question the product on the field. "I think we

are still going to see some growing pains. I think we're going to see probably an uptick while these suspensions play out," said Oklahoma State professor John Holden, who holds a Ph.D. in sports law and corruption of sport.

The NFL believes blanketing its personnel with information is the best remedy in an era where the association between the league

and gambling companies continues to grow.

"To ensure the integrity of the game, we have to double and triple and quadruple down on our education efforts," NFL executive vice president of public affairs Jeff Miller said. "And that's just what we're doing."

Of those suspended for gambling policy violations since the start of 2022, three players and one as-

sistant suspended were disciplined for betting on non-NFL sports.

Holden thinks the suspensions playing out in the NFL are more than a statistical anomaly. He believes there are likely more investigations that will be revealed in the coming months.

"I wouldn't expect that we'll see a ton more of guys getting suspended for betting on NFL games. At this point, that message should be getting home," he said. "The other stuff, betting from the team facility on NBA games or MLB games, college football. ... I think it's probably going to be something that we see every year." That carveout that allows players to place wagers on other sports is not collectively bargained for, Miller said, adding that it's part of discussions with the NFLPA and "has existed for a long time" and not different from what the NBA, MLB and NHL allow. "The only distinction being the availability of it," Miller said. "And so, on the area where it governs league personnel or team personnel or coaches or others, it's a decision that we can make more unilaterally." □

Iga Swiatek withdraws from Bad Homburg Open with fever and possible food poisoning

BAD HOMBURG, Germany (AP) — Top-ranked Iga Swiatek withdrew from the Bad Homburg Open on Friday with a fever and possible food poisoning, three days before the start of Wimbledon.

Swiatek was scheduled to play in her first career grass-court semifinal match on Friday against Lucia Bronzetti, who gets a walkover to Saturday's final.

"I'm so sorry but I have to pull out of my match today. I had a restless night because of some fever and possible food poisoning," Swiatek said in a statement on Instagram. "I'm not able to perform today and I need to take

care of myself. I hope I'll be fine soon. Your support in Bad Homburg was amazing, thank you.

It was a pleasure to play here. And I hope I will be back."

Swiatek, the French Open and U.S. Open champion, had been upbeat this week about adapting to play on grass, historically the surface which had brought her the least success. Following her French Open victory, Swiatek was on a 10-match win streak after beating Anna Blinkova in the Bad Homburg quarterfinals on Thursday.

Swiatek has been drawn against Zhu Lin in the first round of Wimbledon.

Bronzetti will play Katerina Siniakova in the final after Siniakova won two matches in one day.

Siniakova completed a 7-5, 4-6, 6-2 win over second-seeded Liudmila Samsonova in a quarterfinal match which resumed Friday after it was suspended Thursday following the second set because of fading light.

The Czech player was back on court soon after to earn a 6-2, 6-2 win over American player Emma Navarro in just over an hour.

Siniakova is the top-ranked women's doubles player and has a 3-4 record in career singles finals, including a loss to Angelique Kerber in the 2021 Bad Homburg



Poland's Iga Swiatek serves against Russia's Anna Blinkova in the quarterfinal at the WTA tennis tournament in Bad Homburg, Germany, Thursday, June 29, 2023.

Associated Press

final. Bronzetti is 1-1 with her first career win coming in May in Morocco.

It will be the first match between the two. □

Weekly SPECIALS



<p>WAS \$11.29 \$6.26 Per KG</p> <p>Grapes Red Seedless</p>	<p>WAS \$18.28 \$15.42 Per KG</p> <p>Entrecanto</p>	<p>WAS \$7.71 \$6.57 Each</p> <p>Strawberries Fresh 1LB</p>	<p>WAS \$4.56 \$2.28 Per KG</p> <p>Chicken Drumsticks</p>
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